

Tommy Wyche

London: I am speaking with Tommy Wyche this afternoon. Mr. Wyche I wanna thank you for joining us this afternoon.

Wyche: It is my pleasure to be out here.

London: What is your vision for the next ten years in the state of South Carolina?

Wyche: Just for the Greenville area, I can't give you for the whole state. My vision for the next ten years in the Greenville area is that we will not crowd ourselves out of the openness that we have now and that we will get more creative people here with things for them to do and enjoy.

London: Do you want to elaborate on that vision?

Wyche: I would like to see artists have a gallery where they could display their art here, which we do not have in Greenville, surprising maybe to you. I think that's one thing that we would need. I think the open space is crucial to the survival, for lack of a better word, to this environment and that is getting threatened all the time. It's a battle of two main streets is what we kid each other about. One, it's a battle of a place like Woodruff Rd. which is just overwhelmed with crowdedness. Someone told me they had a 100 variances in their zoning in that area, which means there's no control and that's got to be ended if we don't wipe ourselves out. We always laughed and said we don't want to become another Atlanta or Charlotte and we are headed down that path right now I think.

London: What key issues need to be addressed in order to achieve that vision?

Wyche: Well, one key issue is to make sure that the governments will stay behind keeping the open spaces and don't give way to one application after another of variances on the zoning. And in that design or consideration, we don't want to put sewage to every piece of acreage in the area and allow that to happen. That is going to be tough because there's going to be an ever increasing demand for subdivision and development. But if we don't watch out, it will eat us up.

London: Talking about current and future growth anticipated, how do you think new growth should be accommodated?

Wyche: I am not in that field too well, but I think to accommodate it is to just not let every square inch of it turn into subdivision. And there is plenty of land if we

1 spread this stuff out. There will be plenty of open space and plenty of room for
2 people.

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4 **London: How do we position ourselves to take advantage of opportunities**
5 **presented by the new global society and still maintain our assets and**
6 **quality of life?**

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8 **Wyche:** The only thing I can think of when you say the new global is that we are
9 competing with very low wages. I think that the only way that we can do that is
10 to recognize we can't be manufacturers anymore. We have to have creative
11 work going on in our community for them to be happy and for them to be
12 productive.

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14 **London: What are the responsibilities of South Carolina leaders regarding**
15 **future generations of South Carolinians?**

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17 **Wyche:** I think our future generation is pretty much what I just said that we must
18 maintain our openness and land and beauty in order for it to be attractive and we
19 must give opportunities for the creative elements as distinguished from the
20 manufacturing blue collar people.

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22 **London: Are there other issues that the state should be address?**

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24 **Wyche:** I think the state needs to address on an urgent basis the expenditure of
25 money to purchase open spaces. We just recently, three years ago, we got the
26 South Carolina Conservation Bank which is an admirable effort to do that with tax
27 money. But it is a drop in the bucket compared to, for example, what North
28 Carolina every year for the last ten, twenty years, they've appropriated a
29 \$100,000 per year. The last three years here we've appropriated about \$18,000
30 per year. And so we've got a long way to catch up and the demand on us here
31 going to is get ever increasing. So we need money from the state before it's all
32 gone. Before the land is all gone.

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34 **London: So even though that was a worthy cause, it is something that**
35 **needs to be maintained in terms of continuing to fund it and to maintain**
36 **conservation areas.**

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38 **Wyche:** Right, and not only to maintain it but to increase the amounts. We are
39 still very active in conservation acquisitions and there is a piece of property that
40 is available now from the Duke Power Company people and to acquire that
41 property will be over four million dollars. If we don't acquire it, then it will be
42 developed and forever gone. So we have got to find the money for doing that. It
43 may be an appropriation from the state and that's hard to come by because there
44 is so much demand for their money. But land is a unique thing because land, if
45 it's not acquired and is developed, then it is gone forever. And so that is a

- 1 demand that will be on us for the next ten years, I think, to make sure we can
- 2 keep this land from being developed.